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TEXTBOOK EXPENDITURES IN LARGE CITY SCHOOL SYSTEMS 1932, 1934, AND 1936

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TEXTBOOK EXPENDITURES IN LARGE CITY SCHOOL SYSTEMS, 1932, 1934, AND 1936

By

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INTRODUCTION

This comparative study of the expenditure per pupil on free textbooks in the public-school systems of cities with 100,000 population and more, for the years 1932, 1934, and 1936 has been made in order to satisfy the numerous requests which are received by the Office of Education for the most recent data available on this subject.

SOURCE OF MATERIAL

The data used are taken from the reports on city school systems collected by this Office for the Biennial Survey of Education, and the computations are based on the number of pupils in average daily attendance for each level of education and for the school system as a whole. The cities used are those in States which require free textbooks for all children in the schools; which authorize by law free textbooks by the county and district school units; or in States where independent local city administrative units have long followed the policy of furnishing textbooks free to all pupils enrolled.

It was in a city school system that the movement to furnish free textbooks to all pupils, generally, was first inaugurated when more than a century ago Philadelphia, Pa., formulated and pursued such a policy.

SUMMARY

This study shows that the amount of expenditure per pupil made for textbooks furnished free by 71 large city public-school systems is almost insignificant, first, as compared to the importance of textbooks as instructional aids, and, second, as compared to the total amount expended for the instructional function. Of the total instructional expenditure both in 1932 and 1934 the amount spent for free textbooks was 1.4 percent, while in 1936 it was but 1.3 percent.

METHOD OF PRESENTATION

The data are presented in two tables. Table 1 gives in detail the per pupil expenditures by cities for the various school levels; table 2 consists of the summaries by regions of the average amounts expended per pupil for each level of education, e. g., elementary, junior high school, senior high school, etc. It also gives the quartiles and medians for the expenditures.

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For the purpose of this study, the cities, excepting those of a million or more population, have been arranged by regions according to geographic location. The grouping together of cities which are subject to similar economic, social, and other influences controlling budgetary matters provides common bases for the computation of averages. In addition to providing data more nearly comparable, this regional arrangement also makes for convenience of comparison.

TOTAL AVERAGE EXPENDITURE

For the combined years of 1932, 1934, and 1936 the study shows that in 71 of the 93 cities in the United States with population of 100,000 and more the average expenditure per pupil for free textbooks was $1.12. For the 1931–32 school year the average amount expended by 67 of these large city school systems was $1.35 per pupil; for 1933–34 the average for 68 cities was 90 cents per pupil; and for 1935–36 the average expenditure reported by 65 cities was $1.10 per pupil.

The periods covered by this study, viz, the school years 1931–32, 1933–34, and 1935–36 present, it is believed, a fairly adequate picture of the trend in expenditure for the item of free textbooks as made by the large city school systems in the 5-year span.

The data for the school years 1932–33 and 1934–35 were not available for inclusion in this study to complete the 5 years from 1931 to 1936 on a yearly basis. However, had such expenditures as were made for these 2 years been included, it is more than likely the averages would have been slightly lower than those shown. This is assumed from the fact that educational expenditures in general were less for the omitted years than for 1931–32 or 1935–36, though more than that for 1933–34.

It will be noted from table 2 that the total average expenditure per pupil at each level of education was largest in 1931–32, declined to a low in 1933–34, and tended upward by 1935–36.

PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURES

A percentage analysis of these average expenditures per pupil for each type of school organization shows that the elementary school expenditure in 1934 was but 74 percent of the amount for 1932; that the junior high school expenditure was 61 percent as much as in 1932; that the senior high school expenditure was 69 percent of the 1932 amount; and the regular 4-year high school expenditure, 80 percent of the 1932 figure. For all levels and school systems combined during the 3 periods, the average expenditure per pupil in 1934 was but 70 percent of the 1932 figure. In 1935–36, the elementary school expenditure for free textbooks rose to $1.10, or to 81 percent of the 1932 average expenditure. The junior high schools restored about

5 percent of the 1932 figure; the senior high schools in 1936 exceeded the 1932 expenditure; and the regular 4-year high schools rose to 85 percent of the 1932 average expenditure. For all regions and types of organizations combined, the average expended in 1936 was 82 percent of the amount spent in 1932. Thus, it will be seen that from 1932 to 1934 there was a decline in the average expenditures per pupil of 40 cents, or 30 percent of the total amount for 1932. About 11 percent of the 1932 expenditure, 15 cents per pupil, was restored from 1934 to 1936 to make an average expenditure of $1.10 per pupil for all textbooks.

COMPARATIVE EXPENDITURES AT VARIOUS EDUCATIONAL LEVELS

The largest average amount expended per pupil for free textbooks by any one level of education in these city school systems was made by the regular 4-year high schools for each of the bienniums shown. The smallest average amount per pupil was expended by the elementary schools. For instance, in 1932 the regular 4-year high schools spent an average per pupil of $2.30 for all regions. This was greater by 115 percent than the amount of $1.07 per pupil spent by elementary schools the same year. In 1934 it was 171 percent greater, and in 1936, 131 percent. Each of the secondary school levels averaged a greater expenditure per pupil for textbooks than did the elementary organization. In 1932 the quartile range for 65 school systems reporting elementary textbook expenditures was from 43 cents to $1.31 with the median at 93 cents per pupil; in 1934 the median was 60 cents, and the quartile range from 30 to 82 cents per pupil; and in 1936, the quartile range was from 66 cents to $1.04 per pupil, with a median of 84 cents.

Table 2 gives the quartiles and medians for 1932, 1934, and 1936 for each of the types of secondary organization and the average for all regions and levels of education combined.

The five largest cities of the United States, each with a population of a million and more, have been treated as a separate group for the purpose of this study. Los Angeles, one of this group, did not report its textbook expenditures for the elementary organization in its system because the State of California furnishes to the elementary school pupils free textbooks, and for this reason evidently the item was omitted by several of the large California cities when reporting to this Office.

REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN EXPENDITURES

Considerable differences for each period exist between the average amounts expended by school systems for the seven regions into which the cities have been grouped. For example, in 1932 the Northeast

regional average for the 28 school systems was $1.51 per pupil, or 214 percent greater than the 51 cents per pupil expenditure of the Great Lakes region during the same period. In 1934, the average amount ($1.06) for the five largest cities, and the amount of 49 cents per pupil average for the Great Lakes region, represented a difference of 57 cents, or 116 percent. In 1936 there was a 146 percent difference between the $1.48 average of the Pacific Coast region and the 60-cent average per pupil for the Rocky Mountain region.

TABLE 1.—*Expenditure per pupil for free textbooks in cities of 100,000 population and more, for various types of schools and for the total of the public-school system, 1932, 1934, and 1936*

City, by region	Average expenditure per pupil for textbooks furnished free by city board of education																					
	Elementary school, including kindergarten			Junior high school			Senior high school			Junior-senior high school			Regular 4-year high school			Vocational and trade high school			Total for entire school system			
	1932	1934	1936	1932	1934	1936	1932	1934	1936	1932	1934	1936	1932	1934	1936	1932	1934	1936	1932	1934	1936	Combined
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Cities of a million or more population:																						
New York, N. Y.	$1.35	$0.83	$1.03	$1.76	$1.34	$1.15	------	------	------	------	------	------	$2.46	$2.18	$2.19	$0.61	$0.49	$0.49	$1.58	$1.15	$1.29	$1.34
Chicago, Ill.	1.28	.83	.69	1.94	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	1.93	1.46	1.43	------	------	------	1.47	.99	.90	1.12
Philadelphia, Pa.	1.28	.84	.99	2.72	1.31	1.59	------	------	------	------	$1.66	$1.93	3.83	1.80	2.28	3.69	.82	.93	1.87	1.07	1.31	1.41
Detroit, Mich.	.44	.63	.79	.51	.44	.66	------	------	------	------	------	------	.11	------	.24	------	------	------	.40	.60	.68	.56
Los Angeles, Calif.	(1)	(1)	(1)	1.21	.74	.77	$1.93	$1.29	$1.49	$2.94	1.38	1.44	1.77	2.46	1.84	.21	.22	.12	1.86	1.30	.96	1.36
Average for group	1.22	.81	.92	1.70	1.10	1.09	1.93	1.29	1.49	2.94	1.39	1.48	2.42	1.93	1.87	1.03	.53	.55	1.47	1.06	1.12	1.22
NORTHEAST:																						
Boston, Mass.	1.78	.88	.93	------	1.80	1.15	------	------	------	------	------	------	2.81	2.87	2.20	1.56	.35	.62	2.05	1.34	1.23	1.52
Pittsburgh, Pa.	.89	.48	.41	1.86	1.64	1.69	------	------	------	1.78	1.71	1.50	1.80	1.53	1.65	.43	.40	.71	1.24	.88	.85	.98
Buffalo, N. Y.	.52	.59	.85	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	1.25	1.71	1.65	.30	1.74	.75	.65	.88	1.02	.86
Newark, N. J.	1.18	.84	.87	3.10	1.68	2.17	------	------	------	------	------	------	4.18	3.52	2.63	------	------	------	1.70	1.34	1.28	1.44
Jersey City, N. J.	1.43	.68	.86	2.28	1.72	.95	------	------	------	------	------	------	4.43	1.86	2.29	------	------	------	2.07	1.03	1.18	1.43
Providence, R. I.	.92	.48	.69	3.17	.73	1.41	3.47	1.96	2.88	------	------	------	------	------	------	.98	.04	.64	1.74	.76	1.23	1.24
Syracuse, N. Y.	.55	.69	1.25	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	.55	.69	1.25	.80
Hartford, Conn.	1.96	.09	1.66	------	------	2.39	------	------	------	------	------	------	4.77	2.44	3.42	------	------	------	2.63	.70	2.20	1.84
New Haven, Conn.	.86	.50	.59	.96	.49	.85	------	------	------	------	------	------	.94	.49	1.99	.96	.06	2.27	.89	.50	.95	.78
Springfield, Mass.	1.35	.33	------	1.94	.49	------	2.27	1.47	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	.52	.03	------	1.64	.58	------	1.11
Bridgeport, Conn.	.85	.05	.65	.61	.69	1.27	------	------	------	------	------	------	3.02	1.14	2.33	------	------	------	1.22	.34	.94	.82
Scranton, Pa.	1.39	1.67	1.34	1.89	1.15	2.08	------	------	------	------	------	------	3.54	1.72	1.94	------	------	------	1.81	1.61	1.53	1.65
Paterson, N. J.	1.70	.51	.55	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	3.23	1.51	2.05	5.28	.13	.84	2.08	.75	.94	1.25
Yonkers, N. Y.	1.29	.71	.63	1.85	1.47	1.81	------	------	------	------	------	------	1.94	1.34	2.35	1.93	.12	1.89	1.51	.92	1.26	1.23
Albany, N. Y.	1.35	1.12	1.30	3.82	1.32	1.70	3.68	5.17	1.71	------	------	------	------	------	------	5.64	------	------	2.07	1.83	1.45	1.80

[1] State furnishes textbooks free to elementary schools. Los Angeles and Oakland, Calif., did not report for any year the textbook expenditures for elementary schools. Likewise Long Beach, Calif., in 1932 or 1934 did not report any expenditures for elementary textbooks.

TABLE 1.—*Expenditure per pupil for free textbooks in cities of 100,000 population and more, for various types of schools and for the total of the public-school system, 1932, 1934, and 1936*—Continued

City, by region	Average expenditure per pupil for textbooks furnished free by city board of education																					
	Elementary school, including kindergarten			Junior high school			Senior high school			Junior-senior high school			Regular 4-year high school			Vocational and trade high school			Total for entire school system			
	1932	1934	1936	1932	1934	1936	1932	1934	1936	1932	1934	1936	1932	1934	1936	1932	1934	1936	1932	1934	1936	Combined
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
NORTHEAST—Continued.																						
Trenton, N. J	$1.04	$0.62	$0.74	$1.97	$1.31	$1.64	$2.40	$2.15	$2.16										$1.44	$1.03	$1.22	$1.23
Worcester, Mass		.85	.60		.54	.24								$1.17	$1.55					.90	.79	.83
Camden, N. J	1.34	.92	.91	2.25	2.10	2.19	3.75	3.85	2.69										1.70	1.43	1.42	1.52
Erie, Pa	1.44	.33	.58	3.37	.10					$2.88	$2.30	$2.06				$3.56	$1.33	$0.75	1.95	.90	1.10	1.32
Fall River, Mass	.71	.13	1.27	.44	1.07	1.67							$0.41	1.67	2.49	2.12			.69	.50	1.54	.90
Elizabeth, N. J	.97	.70	.87	2.10	1.10	1.68	2.74	2.29	1.56							1.40	1.36	1.65	1.51	1.11	1.24	1.28
Cambridge, Mass		.24												1.76						.66		.66
New Bedford, Mass	.59	.40	.80	1.83	1.12	1.09	2.47	1.78	2.01										.99	.70	1.02	.90
Reading, Pa	1.98	.81	1.32	1.49	.79	1.30	4.05	1.59	2.94										2.12	.91	1.59	1.54
Somerville, Mass	1.02	.83	.60	1.59	1.34	1.06	2.35	1.65	1.57							.63	.54	.57	1.39	1.11	.90	1.13
Lynn, Mass	1.39	1.04	.88	1.02	1.27	1.56	1.53	2.02	2.10										1.32	1.32	1.34	1.33
Utica, N. Y	.91	.27	.77										.41	.95	.70				.82	.44	.75	.67
Lowell, Mass	.85	.57		1.56	.42		3.14							.64		.95			1.37	.56		.96
Average for region	1.14	.64	.83	1.99	1.19	1.43	2.88	2.22	2.57	2.03	1.86	1.64	2.42	1.89	2.01	1.17	.95	1.39	1.51	.99	1.17	1.21
GREAT LAKES (including Ohio Valley):																						
Cleveland, Ohio	.23	.09	.60																.23	.09	.60	.38
Cincinnati, Ohio	.43	.37	.26	1.37	1.02	1.89				3.19	2.04	1.54	2.87	2.36	1.99	.26	.35	.26	.98	.77	.60	.78
Toledo, Ohio	.23	.28	1.05	.19								.80				.90			.23	.29	.83	.45
Columbus, Ohio	.37	.43	.40			.36		.10	.03			.36							.37	.37	.33	.35
Akron, Ohio	.79	.60	.97										1.71	1.80	1.28			1.10	1.00	.91	1.06	.99
Dayton, Ohio	.28	.17	.50	.36	.36	1.67		.21		.34	.20	.94					.03		.31	.20	.74	.40
Youngstown, Ohio	.31	.64	1.94	.59	.71	1.27	.04	.02		.37	.38	.30							.17	.56	1.43	.71
Grand Rapids, Mich	.42	.01	.30			.06						.06						.02	.42	.01	.19	.20
Flint, Mich	.82	.47	.82	1.32	.99	1.08	1.55	1.75	1.65										1.04	.80	1.03	.96
Canton, Ohio		.74			2.15			1.83												1.13		1.13
Average for region	.38	.33	.71	.84	.98	.47	1.08	.82	.72	1.68	.96	.62	1.24	1.90	.96	.27	.21	.27	.51	.49	.69	.57

North Mississippi Valley:																						
St. Louis, Mo	1.03	1.47	1.30										1.32	2.78	1.49	2.96	.76	.67	1.13	1.72	1.43	1.42
Minneapolis, Minn	1.41	.23	.71	4.21	.52	.84				3.08									2.04	.29	.75	1.06
Kansas City, Mo	1.32	.75	1.22	.05	.75	.88							.04			.20		.94	.95	.61	1.18	.89
Omaha, Nebr	.85	.42	.95										1.52	1.01	1.54				1.04	.58	1.12	.91
Peoria, Ill	.28	.63	.03						.12				.23						.27	.44	.09	.27
Duluth, Minn	1.10	.67	.82	1.02		.84	1.06	.71	.88		.70								1.08	.69	.84	.87
Average for region	1.12	.84	1.03	2.69	.53	.82	1.06	.71	.63	3.08	.70		.91	2.18	1.84	2.33	.76	.73	1.25	.91	1.05	1.08
Southern:																						
Baltimore, Md	1.41	.31	.72	1.88	.66	1.44							2.55	1.08	1.92	1.39	.45	1.53		.47	1.17	1.08
Washington, D. C	1.10	.93	.59	3.13	1.54	1.41							3.65	3.21	2.31				1.90	1.45	1.06	1.46
Louisville, Ky	.31	.16	.06	.41	.52	1.55	.16	.05	1.80		.29		.25	.18		.18	.03	.58	.31	.26	.57	.37
Atlanta, Ga		1.68	1.15		1.73	1.49		1.80	1.95		1.76								1.71	1.33	1.52
Birmingham, Ala	.51	.56	.77																.51	.56	.77	.61
Memphis, Tenn		.26	.90		.39			.17			.32									.26	.90	.51
Richmond, Va	.86	.60	1.01	1.02	.93	1.19							2.54	1.49	1.53				1.33	.82	1.14	1.09
Norfolk, Va		.66	.79		.78	.92		.30						.88						.64	.81	.72
Chattanooga, Tenn	1.84																		1.84			1.84
Wilmington, Del	1.23	.97	.89	2.72		5.81					.71		3.99	1.76	6.84		.72	.50	2.16	1.19	3.41	2.33
Knoxville, Tenn		.49																		.49		.49
Average for region	1.03	.42	.74	2.03	1.08	1.64	.16	.74	1.90		1.00		3.43	1.68	3.54	1.31	.49	1.19	1.41	.81	1.12	1.06
Southwestern:																						
Dallas, Tex	.88	.84	1.91		.93	1.96							.68	.65	2.94				.84	.80	2.18	1.28
Tulsa, Okla	1.34	.41	.39	1.71	.56	.30	.39	.59											1.28	.46	.30	.68
Average for region	1.04	.74	1.40	1.71	.60	.66	.39	.59					.68	.65	2.94				.95	.42	1.46	1.05
Rocky Mountain:																						
Denver, Colo	1.01	.17	.58	1.06	.65	.36													1.02	.31	.52	.61
Salt Lake City, Utah	1.20	.75	.81	1.20	.70								.60	.09	.53				1.12	.63	.71	.82
Average for region	1.09	.41	.68	1.11	.67	.36							.60	.09	.53				1.07	.46	.60	.71
Pacific Coast:																						
San Francisco, Calif	.39	.29	.44	1.33	1.35	1.23	.66		2.71	.50		4.38	1.08	1.18	3.25				.66	.65	1.27	.85
Seattle, Wash	.59	.40	1.12	.90	.67	2.04					.75		1.93	1.21	2.54			1.71	.62	.66	1.63	.99
Oakland, Calif.[1]				1.57	1.78	1.80	3.85	3.11	2.68	4.91	1.17	2.51	3.17	1.81	2.18	2.47	2.15	2.04	2.48	2.04	2.20	2.23
San Diego, Calif	.95	.67	.94	3.89	1.10	1.65					1.40	2.22	5.70	1.42	1.98				2.44	.92	1.34	1.56
Long Beach, Calif.[1]			.83			1.26			1.52									2.85			1.11	1.11
Spokane, Wash	.93	1.24	1.37	.14	.25	1.67							1.18	.68	1.51				.96	1.02	1.43	1.13
Tacoma, Wash	.79	1.18	1.26	.71	1.47	1.75	1.85	1.91	2.21										.99	1.43	1.63	1.34
Average for region	.62	.55	.88	1.62	1.34	1.59	2.06	2.62	2.23	3.96	1.18	2.30	2.23	1.18	2.56	1.03	2.15	2.04	1.20	.94	1.48	.97
Average for all cities	1.07	.68	.85	1.72	1.07	1.16	1.37	.95	1.38	2.37	1.33	1.26	1.64	1.99	1.96	1.05	.66	.86	1.35	.95	1.10	1.12

TABLE 2.—*Average amount spent per pupil for free textbooks by the public-school system in cities of 100,000 population and more, by the various types of school organization and by regions, 1932, 1934, and 1936*

Region (city group)	Expenditure per pupil in average daily attendance for textbooks, by various educational levels																			
	Elementary (including kindergarten)				Junior high school				Senior high school				Regular 4-year high school				Total for systems (including vocational, trade, and junior-senior high schools)			
	1932	1934	1936	Number of cities reporting	1932	1934	1936	Number of cities reporting	1932	1934	1936	Number of cities reporting	1932	1934	1936	Number of cities reporting	1932	1934	1936	Number of cities reporting
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Average for cities of a million and more population	[1] $1.22	[1] $0.81	[1] $0.92	4	$1.70	[2] $1.10	[2] $1.09	5	$1.93	$1.29	$1.49	1	$2.42	$1.93	$1.87	5	$1.47	$1.06	$1.12	5
Northeast	1.14	.64	.83	28	1.99	1.19	1.43	23	2.88	2.22	2.57	11	2.67	1.89	2.01	16	1.51	.99	1.17	28
Great Lakes	.38	.33	.71	10	.84	.98	.47	8	1.06	.82	.72	5	1.24	1.90	.96	3	.51	.49	.69	10
North Mississippi Valley	1.12	.84	1.03	6	2.69	.53	.82	3	1.06	.71	.63	4	.91	2.18	1.84	3	1.25	.91	1.05	6
Southern	1.03	.42	.74	11	2.03	1.03	1.64	8	.16	.74	1.90	4	3.43	1.68	3.54	6	1.41	.81	1.12	11
Southwestern	1.04	.74	1.40	2	1.71	.60	.66	2	.39	.59	-------	1	.68	.65	2.94	1	.95	.42	1.46	2
Rocky Mountain	1.09	.41	.68	2	1.11	.67	.36	2	-------	-------	-------	0	.60	.09	.53	1	1.07	.46	.60	2
Pacific Coast	[3] .62	[3] .55	[3] .88	6	1.62	1.34	1.59	7	2.06	2.62	2.23	5	2.23	1.18	2.56	5	1.20	.94	1.48	7
Total average	1.07	.68	.85	-------	1.76	1.07	1.16	-------	1.37	.95	1.38	-------	2.30	1.84	1.96	-------	1.35	.95	1.10	-------
Quartile 3	1.31	.82	1.04	-------	1.97	1.35	1.68	-------	3.42	1.94	2.32	-------	3.00	1.84	2.31	-------	1.73	1.04	1.31	-------
Median	.93	.60	.84	-------	1.55	.95	1.28	-------	2.37	1.42	1.95	-------	1.75	1.50	1.93	-------	1.10	.71	1.02	-------
Quartile 1	.43	.30	.66	-------	.72	.65	.84	-------	.68	.41	1.42	-------	.65	1.02	1.41	-------	.62	.52	.72	-------
Total number of systems reporting	61	67	63	69	47	50	50	58	20	25	21	29	37	35	35	40	67	63	65	71

[1] Los Angeles, Calif., not included.
[2] Chicago, Ill., not included. Discontinued the junior high school organization by 1934.
[3] Oakland, Calif., failed to report textbook expenditures for elementary schools, and San Diego reported only on elementary textbook expenditures for the year 1936.

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